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DOCUMENTS RELATING TO PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

WARWICK PETITION.

The Gentlemen and Inhabitants of Warwick have come to the Resolution of presenting the following Petition for Peace to the House of Commons.

To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, the Humble Petition of the Burgesses and Inhabitants of the Borough of Warwick.

Sheweth,

That your Petitioners beg leave to represent to your Honourable House, the pain with which they have contemplated the numerous and complicated evils arising from the present wide-spread, and long-protracted war, and the growing despondency which pervades all classes of the community, from the remembrance, that no effort has been made hitherto for the restoration of Peace, and from the apprehension that none is likely to be made, without the direct and salutary influence of public opinion upon public measures.

That your petitioners, at a juncture which appears to them highly favourable to your wishes, address your Honourable House with the greater confidence, because they conceive, that the members of a new Parliament, by looking abroad upon the peculiar character of those eventful times, and by adapting their Counsels to the real and imperious exigencies of the commonweal, may obtain for themselves the gratitude of a free and enlightened people, and may stand distinguished to the latest posterity, as the restorers of tranquillity and security to the whole civilized world.

That your petitioners cannot, without feelings of unfeigned anxiety, observe the rapidity with which the calamities of war have recently extended themselves from the impoverished and depopulated nations of Europe, to the distant shores of South America, where civil discord subjects thousands, and tens of thousands, to the destroying sword, and of North America, where a race of men, united to us by the ties of a common descent, a common language, and a common religion, are now

opposed to us, under circumstances the most distressing, and most alarming to them, and to ourselves.

That your petitioners believe it to be a fact quite unparalleled in the history of civilized nations throughout Europe, that of the last twenty years, eighteen have been spent in actual warfare, and that the lives already sacrificed in the course of it, may, without exaggeration, be said to exceed the number of male adults now existing in Great Britain.

That, reflecting on what has passed, and what is passing, in foreign lands, your petitioners have to mourn for the miseries endured by multitudes of valiant men, perishing on the field of battle, lingering months and years in the gloomy prisons of the enemy, languishing in hospitals, or "slowly wasting by disease in crowded camps, and pestilential climates."

That your petitioners, looking around them at home, are afflicted every where by those spectacles of calamity, which necessarily accompany a state of continued war, and which are to be found in the deserted cottages of peasants and manufacturers; in the tears of aged parents, "weeping for their offspring, because they are not;" and amidst the forlorn widows and helpless orphans of their slaughtered countrymen.

That, while our youth, at an age and in numbers hitherto unexampled, are balloted for military service, and seduced or forced away from the useful and meritorious employments of husbandry and trade, your petitioners have to lament the past and approaching ruin of our once opulent merchants, the sudden interruption given to our once-flourishing manufactures, and the melancholy condition of our artisans, formerly, as your petitioners remember, a contented, industrious, and honest race, but now disheartened by dreary poverty, degraded by galling dependence, and exposed in many quarters to temptations, by which they may be precipitated into such acts of violence, as would render the forfeiture of their lives a necessary, but most deplorable measure of public justice for the preservation of the public safety.

That, in addition to these dreadful effects of war, the burdens of taxes accu-

stimulated, and accumulating for the purpose of carrying it on, in countries so remote from each other, and with expenses so enormous, have raised most exorbitantly the price of provisions, have diverted from circulation the current coin of the realm, have introduced in its stead a fictitious, precarious, and fluctuating kind of property in paper, and have filled our gazettes with bankruptcies, our jails with debtors, and our numerous workhouses with paupers, who are compelled to flee farther as to a place of refuge, from hunger and thirst, from cold and nakedness, and all the other baleful consequences of unexpected and involuntary exclusion from the daily labours, which had supplied their daily bread.

That your petitioners, therefore, upon every principle dear to you, and to themselves, as Englishmen, and as Christians, most earnestly beseech you, to direct your attention to the multiplied scenes of private distress, and public danger, which characterize the present war and to employ every means which the discernment of your honourable house can devise, or its authority recommend, for the speedy re-establishment of peace.

At the same time, your petitioners beg leave to assure this honourable house, that the peace which they are solicitous to obtain, is not such an one as would endanger the solid interests, or debase the real dignity of their country. The prosperity, liberty, and independence of that country are, in the opinion of your petitioners, inseparable from its glory; and, therefore, it is in a spirit of steady, considerate, and genuine patriotism alone, that they now prefer to your Honourable House their prayer for the restoration of those blessings which peace only can procure, and the importance of which they will think it their duty to urge repeatedly in those respectful, but firm and serious appeals, which the Constitution has authorized them to make, as free-born Britons, to the justice, wisdom, and humanity, of their representatives in Parliament.

NOTTINGHAM PETITION FOR PEACE.

To his Royal Highness the Prince Regent.

Sir,

We, the undersigned Burgesses, or Inhabitants of the Town and County of the

Town of Nottingham, and its precincts, beg leave to claim the attention of your Royal Highness, as being the representative of a Sovereign, whose highest glory we presume it is, that he should be considered as the Father of his people; while we dutifully present, before the Throne, a statement of the evils from war, experienced by ourselves, and by millions beside of his Majesty's vast family: and while we earnestly supplicate, from a paternal regard, so becoming an English Monarch, that relief from dire distress, which the speedy restoration of peace alone can be expected to afford. On that Royal power, which was designed to be a blessing and protection to millions, we call for an exertion of God-like benevolence, which shall speedily terminate a contest, unhappily commenced with precipitancy, and direfully prolonged by the exasperated passions and infatuated understandings of men. Many are the motives to peace, and most powerful, which might be expected to influence the mind of your Royal Highness. A respect for the divine principles of christianity and humanity, it may be hoped, will prevent your Royal Highness from being swayed by the representations of men, whose prejudices, passions, or selfish interests, render them advocates for the perpetuity of a war, which, if much longer persisted in, will evidently be accompanied by civil commotion, by famine, and by pestilence.

An awful admonition of our having nearly exhausted the resources of the country, is painfully obtruded on our notice, by the rapidly increasing beggary and wretchedness of myriads of its industrious and frugal inhabitants, who, at no very distant period, enjoyed affluence or competence; and also by the obviously increasing inability of our ablest financiers, even while imposing a most oppressive taxation, to devise means for raising supplies in any wise correspondent to the public annual expenditure.

In the largest parish of this once flourishing, but now miserable town, nearly a third part of its population, in consequence of the interruption of trade, is reduced to the state of paupers; and in the other parishes of the town, not less oppressive so those inhabitants on whom a levy can be made, is the burden of poor's rates. And we are credibly informed, that a like re-